



Universal Design: Physical Accessibility Checklist (Template)

Introduction

Creating and retrofitting inclusive and accessible educational campuses is crucial for fostering an equitable learning experience. Use this template to identify key features of Universal Design in physical spaces, whether you're evaluating an existing environment or planning a new one. It provides guidance on what to look for to ensure that spaces are welcoming, functional, and accessible for everyone.

1a. Campus: Signage

- Campus map:** Located outdoors in fixed locations.
- Consistent hardware:** Uniform mounting for all signage.
- Design templates:** Standardized for ease of recognition.
- Readable fonts:** Large, sans serif, high-contrast fonts.
- Clear symbols:** Easy to understand symbols.
- Alternative formats:** Include braille and tactile information
- Highly Visible:** Large, well-lit, and in easy to find places

1b. Campus: Transportation and Walkways

- Accessible paths:** Unobstructed, flat or gently sloping.
- Stair and ramp access:** With railings, and elevators where needed.
- Lighting:** Always-on in high traffic areas, motion sensors at entrances.
- Parking:** Well-marked, paved, with handicap spaces near main entries.
- Security:** Surveillance cameras in strategic locations.
- Wayfinding Assistance:** Digital app or phone service for additional navigation assistance

2a. Buildings: Entryways and Corridors

- Wide, Automatic Doors:** Minimum 3 feet wide. Automatic open button 2-5 feet from door.
- Sheltered main entry:** Protection from weather.
- Corridors:** Handrails, well-lit, non-glare surfaces, navigation instructions
- Lever handles:** Easier to operate than knobs.
- Building name and room numbers:** Clearly labeled, large font, well-lit.

2b. Buildings: Lighting, Sound, and Air Quality

- Noise control:** Acoustic panels and rugs.
- Natural and task lighting:** Adjustable blinds, non-glare surfaces.
- Lighting variety:** Task and wall lighting in addition to overhead.
- Non-glare surfaces:** For better visibility and comfort.



- Automatic adjustment systems:** Make changes to lighting and HVAC based on time of day, occupancy, and weather

2c. Buildings: Navigation and Safety

- Ramps/elevators:** In addition to stairs.
- Clear signage:** Easy-to-read maps and room numbers.
- Evacuation routes:** Clearly marked and easy to follow.
- Emergency alarms:** Multi-sensory and clearly marked.
- Flooring:** Slip-resistant and non-glare

2d: Buildings: Comfort and Inclusivity

- Common Areas:** Various types of seating, backs to the wall as much as possible
- Culturally inclusive:** Welcoming environment for all backgrounds.
- Water fountains:** At various heights, with sensor bottle fill.
- Welcoming environment:** Appealing to diverse cultures, ages, and abilities.
- Universal Restrooms:** Non-gendered and accessible

3. Classrooms

- Adjustable furniture:** Height desks and sit/stand desks.
- Seating options:** With and without armrests, adjustable heights.
- Movable furniture:** Locking wheels, felt sliders for easy rearrangement.
- Technology:** Accessible power outlets, USB ports, sound amplification, video projection.
- Noise control:** Acoustic panels and rugs.

4. Library

- Checkout options:** Various methods for book checkout.
- Seating variety:** Adjustable options for seating and desks
- Assistive technology:** Screen readers, text magnifiers, braille materials, audio books.
- Easy-to-read signs:** Large fonts and pictograms with consistent formatting.
- Accessible shelves:** Varying heights and reach ranges.
- Sensory Experience:** Acoustic design and soundproofing, natural light and controllable shades

5. Cafeteria

- Signage:** Clearly indicates various food stations, dietary options, potential allergens
- Hygiene:** Easy access to hand sanitizing stations, table disinfectant and cleaning cloths, effective trash removal and dish return systems



- Acoustics:** Noise-dampening panels, quiet dining areas for those sensitive to noise
- Tables and Seating:** Variety of options, wide aisles and wheelchair accessible tables
- Flooring:** Anti glare, non-slip, antimicrobial flooring

Universal Design: Physical Environment Scavenger Hunt (Template)

1. Entrance Accessibility

- Door Width: Are doors at least 32 inches wide?
- Automatic Entry: Are automatic doors available for users with mobility impairments?
- Thresholds and Slopes: Are thresholds low and ramps compliant with slope regulations (1:12 ratio)?
- Signage: Is signage accessible (Braille, high contrast, tactile)?

2. Pathway and Circulation Space

- Pathway Width: Are all pathways 36 inches wide or more?
- Turnaround Space: Is there a 60-inch turning radius for wheelchairs at key locations?
- Clear of Obstructions: Are pathways free from barriers like furniture or equipment?
- Floor Surfaces: Are floor surfaces smooth and slip-resistant?

3. Accessible Facilities

- Restroom Accessibility: Are restrooms fully accessible (stalls, sinks, and grab bars)?
- Furniture Flexibility: Are height-adjustable desks and flexible seating available?
- Common Area Accessibility: Are reception/help desks, cafeteria counters, etc., accessible (36 inches or lower)?
- Emergency Systems: Do alarms include visual and auditory components?

4. Lighting and Visual/Audio Accessibility

- Lighting Levels: Are lighting levels sufficient and adjustable where needed?
- Glare Reduction: Are anti-glare surfaces or blinds in use to reduce visibility issues?
- Signage Contrast: Is there high contrast between signage and its background for visibility?
- Natural Lighting: Is natural lighting used effectively, minimizing eye strain?

5. Assistive Technology and Emergency Systems

- Assistive Technology: Are assistive technologies (screen readers, hearing loops) available and functional?
- Emergency Alarms: Do alarms meet accessibility standards, including visual and auditory alerts?
- Emergency Exit Access: Are emergency exits accessible and clearly marked?
- Accessible Evacuation Equipment: Is evacuation equipment available for individuals with mobility impairments?